

VIEW OF THE SLAVE-PEN, WASHINGTON CITY, D. C. — See Page 60.

THE

CHILD'S BOOK ON SLAVERY;

OR,

SLAVERY MADE PLAIN.

“And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”—LUKE, 6: 31.

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THE
CHILD'S BOOK ON SLAVERY.

I.

THE DESIGN.

Is it right for one person to hold another as his property or slave? There are few questions so much talked of, and thought of, as this: the people talk of it all over this country; some on one side, some on the other. They talk of it in England, but there nearly all are on one side; they talk of it in other countries of Europe, and in many lands throughout the world.

Slavery has existed, at some time or other, in almost every nation. It

is well, it is almost necessary to our education and respectable intelligence, that we know something about it. We should have right opinions, and be able to give reasons for our opinions. It was, I believe, the distinguished statesman and philosopher, Edmund Burke, of England, who said, that if we were deprived of all the knowledge that we obtain during the first three years of our lives, we should be the most ignorant of all living creatures on the face of the globe. This at least is certain, that all the useful knowledge we learn in childhood and in youth, has much to do in shaping our course of life in after years.

The *design* of this little book is to show the truth in regard to Slavery, and to give important information concerning it to all readers who do not already know it well. It is intended to

show what slavery is, what the principles of truth and justice require us to think of it, and what the Bible teaches in regard to it. Be patient to read and think, and it is hoped that the book will do you good.

It is addressed to children and youth; but, like most books of much profit to them, it is thought that it will be useful to many older readers.

II.

HAVE YOU SEEN SLAVERY?

IN some of the books and papers you have read, you must have seen the words "Slave" and "Slavery;" and you have heard about slaves and slaveholders. But have you *seen* slavery? It may be that some slave has been **at** your father's house. Perhaps he kept

away in some sly corner for fear his master would come and get him; and after he had staid there long enough to eat, and sleep, and get some rested, it may be that he went on his journey again, so as to get into Canada, where his master could not have the power to go and take him back again into slavery. Perhaps you have seen some slave attending his master while traveling, or visiting in the Northern States. It may be that you have yourself traveled or lived in some Slave State, where you have seen many slaves. And you may be ready to say that slavery is not a bad thing, because you may not have seen any thing that was very wrong in it.

But the whole of slavery is not seen at a glance. We need to think about all its parts, and its whole spirit, in order to decide whether it is good or bad. No doubt you have seen the spirit

of oppression very often, and that is one part of the spirit of slavery. You have seen one person wishing to deprive another of what belonged to him by right. Children sometimes do this in their plays. You may have known persons to require more of a *servant* than they ought. Perhaps they would not give him sufficient or wholesome food. It is not unfrequent that one person wishes to oppress or wrong another. This you may have seen; and it is one part of the spirit of slavery. But you have seen a good deal if you have seen the *whole* of slavery. Not having seen it all, you need to study it well; its principles, and laws, and practice. And to understand it fully, you must take the reliable testimony of others, just as you take the testimony of those who write Geographies and other books; just as you believe what the missionaries say,

and what some travelers tell us about Jerusalem and Palestine, and other cities and countries of which you have read in the Bible

III.

THE NUMBER OF SLAVES.

If we stop and reflect that there are between three and a half and four millions of slaves in this land, and consider how large a number that is, it may be that we shall be led to regard slavery as a matter of more importance than we had supposed. You may remember that on the 4th of July, 1776, our fathers solemnly declared the thirteen American colonies of this country free and independent. These colonies had before been connected with Great Britain, and

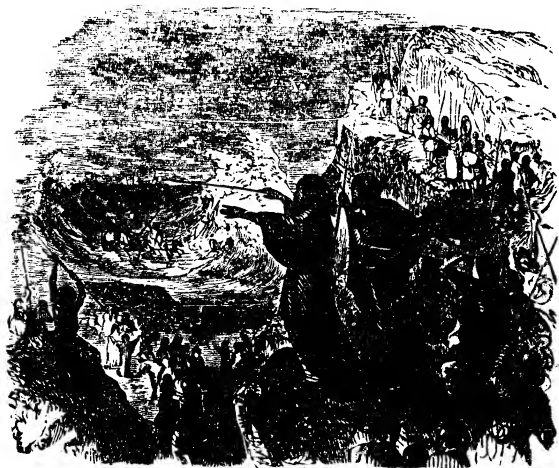
from that country most of the people had come to this. But the Declaration of Independence was followed by a long war with the mother country, which lasted more than seven years, and then Great Britain acknowledged our Independence, and we were free. These events have already led to great and important results, and will yet lead to many more. But how many people do you suppose there were at that time in all the thirteen colonies? Only about three millions; less, by a half million or more, than the present number of slaves in the slave States of our country.

You have read and heard much about the Jews, who lived in the time when Christ was upon the earth, and a long time before it. They were a very important people, though sometimes very wicked.

You may know that in the time

of Moses the Jews lived in Egypt, where they were held by Pharaoh and his people as slaves. Finally, the Lord told them to leave Egypt, and go to Canaan. Pharaoh was unwilling they should go, and tried in many ways to prevent it. The Lord sent plagues upon him and his people, to make him willing. Sometimes he would give consent, and then take it back again. At last Moses and the Jews went without his permission, and then they were fugitive slaves by the Lord's command. While they were on the way and came to the Red Sea, God divided the waters, so that they stood up in great mountains on either side, and Moses and the Jews went through on the bottom of the sea on dry ground. Pharaoh and his host went in pursuit of them to take them back. But as they attempted to pass through between the great billows of waters, the Lord caused the waters to

flow down again into their former place, and Pharaoh and his people were all drowned in the sea.



Now the Jews, while in Egypt, counting all the men, women and children, were never more than two or three millions in number; considerably

less than the number of slaves in this land; and during all the forty years that they wandered in the wilderness, and all the time that they lived in Canaan, they never numbered very many, if any, more than the slaves now in this country. The slaves may not be as important a people as the Jews of old, or as the inhabitants of this land when our Independence was declared and gained; but they are enough in number to be very important; and we know not what great things God will yet do with them or their posterity. It is certainly just as wicked to do wrong to them as to any others. The fact that they are poor and helpless, does not make it right to oppress them. If it is wrong to keep one person in slavery, what is it to keep three or four millions in slavery? What will such a great wrong lead to by and by, if it be continued?

IV.

THE DUTY OF LEARNING ABOUT SLAVERY.

WE are inclined to think but little about those whom we do not see, and have never seen. For this reason, in part, perhaps, we do not care as much as we should about the heathen, and all who are destitute of the gospel. The sight of the eye often affects the heart. But what we cannot see we ought to learn in some other manner. What if we should refuse to read all the books and papers that tell us about the heathen, and be unwilling to hear the story of the missionary who sometimes comes to us from heathen ground? Would not that be wicked? Now, you may live in one of the Free States, which lie in the Northern and Western part of this country. The States where they

hold men in slavery are in the Southern part of the United States. You may have never lived or traveled there; or if you have, you may know but very little of the slavery which exists there in many places. But it is just as real and hard a thing to be a slave, even though you may think or know but little about it. If you are young, there are a great many children just as young, who were *born* slaves, and are *held* slaves, and, if slavery continues, will always *be* slaves until they die. Jesus Christ came into our world of sin and misery because he loved us, and wished to show us that he knew all about our trials and temptations, so that we should feel like going to him to be saved. This example of our Redeemer should teach us to learn about each other's trials and sorrows, so that we shall know better how to love and pity one another. For this reason we should be

willing to learn about the slaves. If they suffer wrong, we should pity and pray for them. If slavery *is* wrong, then all the people of this land ought to know it, and do all they can to stop it, and to prevent there being any more slaves. But there are many people who *love* slavery, and wish to have it last as long as they live. They try to get more slaves, and more States where they may hold slaves. Then ought not we to be awake to all the truth concerning slavery, and do our duty? If slavery is good, we ought to help it forward; and if it is bad, we ought to think, speak, and act against it.



V.

DOES COLOR MAKE SLAVERY.

You may be ready to ask, "What is a slave? If there are so many of them, and so many children, too, are slaves, and if they are so poor, and many of them suffer so much as I have heard, what *is* a *slave*?" Well, let us see. You may have thought that all black people are slaves, because all the slaves you have seen may have been dark colored. But some colored people are not slaves, and it is not the color of the skin that makes a slave. Some people are slaves who are not black or dark colored. Moses and all his people, I have said, were slaves, in Egypt, but they were not colored people. I have known some children to think that colored children were not as good as others, because their skin was dark.

But no one can help the color of his skin, if he keeps it clean; and no little colored boy or girl ought to be thought less of for being dark colored. It is true, in this country they have no laws to make any body a slave unless his mother was a slave and had some negro blood in her veins. But is **that** any reason why a mother should be a slave, or why all her children should be slaves? Can you tell me why a negro should be a slave any more than a white person? Why should one mother's children be slaves any more than another mother's children? Slavery is not **the** color of the skin; and it is not the color of the skin that makes a slave, **or** that makes any reason why one should be a slave.

VI.

WHAT IS A SLAVE.

To be a slave is to be held and treated as a piece of property. Perhaps your father has a horse. That is his property. He has a right to make the horse work, only he should treat him kindly, and give him good food and enough of it. He has the right to harness the horse before the buggy or carriage, and take your mother and all the children, and give you a nice ride. If the horse is *his*, nobody has a right to tell him he must not use the horse so. And then, if he thinks it best, he has a right to sell the horse to somebody else, and take the money to buy some food and clothing for his family. Nobody has a right to forbid him. He need not go and ask even the horse, if he may have

him plow the garden or draw the wagon, for the horse would not understand him, and could not speak to him, and will never grow so old or so wise, that he can understand our words, or talk himself. Your father feeds and takes care of the horse. He could not take care of himself. He could not buy hay and oats for himself to eat, or make a barn to stay in during the storms and cold weather. And he will never learn enough to do such things. So he will always need somebody to own him and keep him. Now the horse is your father's property. So your father's wagon and carriage and plow and spade and his hat and boots and all his clothing are his property. And your mother's chairs and tables and stove, and crockery and dresses and bonnet are her property. They can keep them till they are all worn out, or they can sell them to somebody else, or

give them away. Now, to be a slave is to be held and treated as property. Sometimes a slave's master keeps his slaves till they die. Sometimes he sells them, or perhaps gives them away to his children. He makes them work just as he pleases, as your father makes his horse work. He does not go and ask the slaves if they will work. He does not hire them and pay them money to work for him, just as I have hired a boy to work for me this afternoon; but he calls them *his*, and means to have them work just as he pleases, whether they wish to or not. Or, if he chooses to sell them, he does it without asking the slaves if he may; and if they do not *wish* to go to live with the man that has bought them, they are *made* to go. And the master claims that he can keep the slaves always if he chooses, or that he can sell them to somebody else to keep always. He gives them some food to

eat, just as your father gives food to his horse. They would not be good for any thing to work if they did not eat. He gives them some clothing to wear; if he did not, they would probably get sick and not be able to work, and perhaps would die. Beside, the law generally would make him pay a fine of money if he did not give them some kind of clothing. Some masters give their slaves better food and clothing than others, but most of the slaves have poor food for human beings to eat, and poor clothing. Slaves-then are those who are held and treated as property. Slaves are human beings; they have souls as well as bodies. But they are treated as to property, just like animals and things. They are bought and sold, or may be, just as cattle and horses and wagons and furniture and clothing are. They are used, as to property, just like tools or merchandise.

VII.

SLAVES CAN NOT OWN ANY THING.

A SLAVE can not really have any thing as his own. Every thing he has belongs to his master. He may *call* some things his; his master may give him something, but still his master can take it all away; or, if his master dies, his children or heirs can take it away. The slave, according to slavery, can not own himself: he can not do with himself what he pleases: he can not hire himself out to work for money or food, unless his master chooses to give him a little time; and after he has given it, he can take it back again, or take whatever the slave earns by his labor. Slave parents can not own their children: they can not do with their children what they please, or what other parents may properly do with their

children: but the master can take the children and sell them away from their parents; and the tears and cries of both parents and children can bring no help.

The slaves can not truly say "these are *my* hands," "*my* feet," "*my* head," "*my* body," for the master can have all the profit of their labor, and he can direct how they shall labor, and what they shall do.

The slave can not say, "*my* mind, *my* soul is my own," for the slave law gives the master the power to say how that mind shall be employed; whether it shall learn or not learn, whether it shall read or not read; and if the slave with his mind earns money, or studies out some valuable invention, it is all the master's. The slave is so poor that he can not call the least thing his; he can not have any thing, but the master can take it away. If he claims himself, it is called disobedience and insurrection. If

he uses what he earns without his master's consent, slavery calls it stealing.

He is not the free owner of his own affections. If he is a child, he may be torn away from father and mother, brothers and sisters, and sold so far off that he never can see them more. If he is a parent, his children may be sold from him, or he from his children; and thus he is cut off from loving them as he would. If neither are sold, the parents must work for the master, and can not use the earnings of their toil to educate and bless their children as they would. Parents and children belong to the master, and not to themselves.

They are not the complete owners of their own desires and hopes. Though they desire and hope only what the Lord allows to all, they are not permitted often, and may not be permitted at all, to *gratify* their warmest desires and their fondest hopes. If they wish to earn and

buy and own a little house and land it is all their master's, and not theirs. If they wish to go to a religious meeting to hear the gospel and worship God, they are not their own enough to go unless the master pleases. And in some States they have laws forbidding the negroes to hold any meetings, even a funeral, without some white person being present. This it is, in part, children, to be a slave, to be the property of another.



VIII.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SLAVE AND
A CHILD.

BUT some people may tell you that there is no difference between being a slave and being a child. They say the child must obey his parents, and so must the slave obey his master, and that the child and the slave are both alike. Well let us see. The Lord commands children to obey their parents. That is all true and right. But he commands them to obey "in the Lord." "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

But if parents should command their children to lie, or steal, or to work on the Sabbath day, such commands would not be in the Lord: they would not be according to his will, and so the

children in that case ought not to obey. But the slave-laws make the slave obey the master in every thing. And many masters make their slaves do what is wrong, and if they refuse, they are often cruelly punished. That is one difference between a slave and a child.

Again: there is a *natural relation* between the child and the parent, which does not exist between the slave and the master. The Lord gives to parents the training and care of their children, because they are their children. The master has no such natural right to the slave; and he is not so proper a person to have the care of him, as the parent is to have the care of the child. Every parent has a peculiar love for his children, and generally will try to do well for them. The Lord Jesus speaks of parents as knowing how to give good gifts to their children, even though they are evil as compared with God. But this

love does not exist in the hearts of slave-masters toward their slaves.

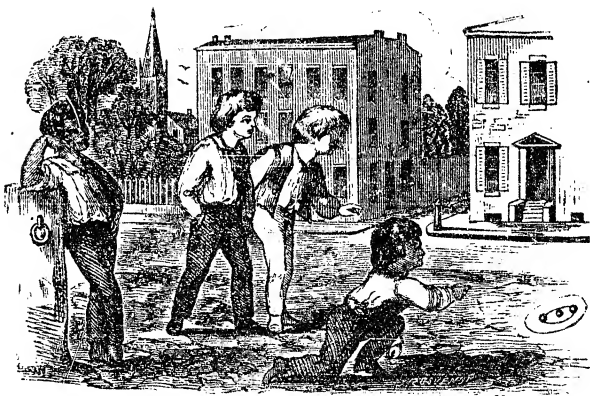
Again, the relation between the child and the parent is first and chiefly for the child's good, but the relation between the slave and his master is for the master's pleasure. The parent is to train the child for future usefulness, for God and heaven. He should educate the child; that is, have him taught to read and write, and cypher, and learn geography, and a great many other useful studies. He should have his child learn to work or do some business, so that he can earn his own living, and get some property, and be useful and happy. The service which the child gives to the parents is but a small reward for all the parent's care and toil for the child. Beside, whatever benefit the child is to the parent, goes into a common stock, and the child has a share in it, perhaps has it all, after his parent's death. But in

real slavery the master keeps the slave for his own benefit, not for the slave's good. He does not educate him, nor does he allow him to go to school, and learn various branches that free children do. He does not teach him a trade, that by and by the slave may take care of himself, and have a home and a family, and do what he pleases, that is right. He does not give him a share in the common stock of property. But the slave must be kept in ignorance, and work for his master, and have nothing, and at last die. This is another difference between the condition of a child and that of a slave.

Again, when the child grows to be a man or woman he can go and do for himself; is his own ruler, and can act just as he pleases, if he only does right. He can go and come; he can buy and sell; if he has a wife and children, they can not be taken away, and he is all his

life *free*. But the slave has no such bright sunshine of hope for him. No time is coming, when he may go and come at his will, when he may own property, and have a family that may not be sold away from him, or he away from them. He never can have a home, and have it all nicely furnished, and see his happy children playing about it, and have a horse and carriage, and a cow, and a pig, and some chickens. He is a slave, and no freedom waits for him till he lies down in his grave; then he is released. And all the little slave boys and girls must feel as Frederick Douglass used to feel, when he was a slave in Baltimore. He and his little white play-fellows would play around the shipyards, or sit upon the curb-stones, or the cellar doors, and Frederick would sometimes say to them, "I wish I could be free as you will be when you get to be men! You will be free you know when you are

twenty-one, and can go where you like, but I am a slave for life. Have I not as good a right to be free as you have?"



And often would they tell him that they believed he ought to be free as well as they, and that they did not believe God ever made any one to be slaves. And this is another difference between being a free-child and a slave-child. Is not the difference so great that any body who wishes can see it? More, who can help seeing it?

IX.

A SLAVE IS NOT A HIRED SERVANT.

SOME people tell us that the slaves at the South are just like the folks that hire out to work for their friends and neighbors here at the North; only that sometimes they are happier and much better off. But, children, can not you see a difference between working for wages, and working for nothing but food and clothing, and those generally very poor? Can you not see a difference between working for a man as long as you agree to, and working all your life-time without agreeing to? Can you not tell the difference between having the liberty to leave a man, when he does not treat you well, or when he does not pay you for your work, and having no liberty at all; but be obliged to labor for him always,

for just what he pleases to give you, or perhaps, be sold into slavery somewhere else? Hired servants ought to be very attentive and dutiful while they are engaged to their employers. The Bible plainly teaches that it is their duty to do so. But after they have fulfilled all they have agreed, if they wish to change their place, or their employers, or their business, they ought to have the privilege to do it. All hired servants have this privilege. Slaves have not.



X.

A SLAVE IS NOT LIKE AN APPRENTICE.

AN apprentice is one who is bound by an agreement to labor for a mechanic or other person for a particular length of time, with the view of learning some trade or art which shall be of special service to the apprentice. Now some people represent that the slave is not much different from the apprentice. Are they right? The apprentice is much like a hired servant. He agrees, or his parent or guardian agrees for him, when he is not of age, to labor so long a time for some person. And that person agrees to teach the apprentice some trade or mystery or art, and give him an education, and perhaps some money and clothing, or other property, at the end of the apprenticeship. There is a

bargain made by the two parties. The apprentice, or his parent or guardian, who has the just control of him, is perfectly free to make the agreement or not. The slave is *not* free to make any agreement. The apprentice makes the engagement for his own benefit. He *wants* the art or trade, and the education and clothing and money. It is far more for his good than for his master's or employer's. No one can tell how great the benefit may be to the apprentice. He expects to get his living, and perhaps support a family or his parents by it, for the rest of life. It may make him very rich or useful; it may be the means of his being very respectable or happy. He only labors for his master enough to pay him for his services and expenses in teaching and feeding and clothing him. On the other hand, with the slave, he does not and can not make any agreement. He does not labor

chiefly for his *own* good. It is for his *master*. He does not work to learn an art or trade. It is to furnish profit to his master. He has no hope, by what he does, to make himself wealthy or respectable and distinguished as a free-man. He works in slavery, and can not get out of it. If he has a family, he can not hope by his industry and perseverance, to get for them a fine little house and garden, or farm and horses and cattle, or a shop or a store. He gets plain food and clothing; all the rest goes to his master. He can not send his children to school to prepare them for the highest respectability and usefulness; he knows not how long it may be before he or his wife and children may be sold away, never to return. His master may want money, and for this his family may be broken up and never meet again till after they all are dead. This is not being an apprentice.

The apprentice engages with his employer for a limited time, generally until he is twenty-one years of age, not for life. The slave is in his master's power all his days. If the apprentice should dislike his trade, or find something else to do that is better for him, when he has done as he agreed with his employer, he can make a change and do what he likes, or what gives him better pay or more comfort. But the slave has no such choice; it is his lot to drudge on till death sets him at liberty from his earthly prison. If the apprentice is not treated, the law of the land gives a remedy; if he is not suitably fed and clothed, the law will punish his master; if the master is cruel toward him, or harms his person, he must suffer for his crime, and the apprentice can be taken away. But the slave often receives very bad treatment. Sometimes his food is not good, or there is not enough of it;

his clothing is often poor and he suffers from the cold; he has no pay but the poorest fare, or what he eats and drinks and wears. His master can make him work under the lash, and oblige him to do more than he is able; he can cruelly beat him till the blood runs from his wounds, and yet the poor slave can make no complaint that will do him any good; if he complains to any one, he may fare the worse for it. The laws of the land will not regard his cries for justice as it does those of the apprentice; his word will not be taken in the courts, and there he is, suffering *injustice* at the best, perhaps shocking *cruelty*, and there is no help for him from man, except in some fortunate cases, where his sufferings become known to compassionate white people, who sometimes relieve him from the savage cruelties. Children, is that apprenticeship?

XI.

SLAVERY IS NOT MERELY CRUELTY.

SOME people say that many *free* persons suffer oppression or cruelty, and that *that* is all the evil there is in slavery. But among free people, if any one suffers cruelty, he can make complaint to the officers of the law, and obtain justice; but the slave's complaint will not be heard. There is *one* difference.

Then, again, if the hired servant or apprentice suffers cruelty, he has a right to go away from his employer; but the slave can not get away unless he runs away, and then he may be caught and punished more severely than ever before, and he may be sold into a far-off and unhealthy part of the country, away from all his slave friends, where he soon sickens, or wears out and dies. Beside,

who but the slave is bound to his master for *life*? Who but the slave has to work all his days for no pay but food and clothing, and that plain or poor? Who but the slave is liable to be sold for money? Who but the slave-master can sell and separate families as he would a flock of sheep? Ah! slaves are made property like the dumb beasts! That is slavery! It is oppression and cruelty indeed, but it is more—it is making property of men, and women, and children; property even of the babes as soon as they are born.



XII.

THE LAWS OF SLAVERY.

CHILDREN, perhaps you think this is very strange, that any people should hold their fellow-beings in slavery. It is strange, but it is true. The wicked human heart is very wicked. You may think that it can not be that there are any *laws* in any of those benighted States, that make some people slaves. You may think that nobody would have such laws upon their law-books. But it is even so, as I will show you from the books themselves. You may not understand all the words, but you can understand enough to get much of the meaning. It might be well for you to take the dictionary and find the meaning of some of the words that you do not understand.

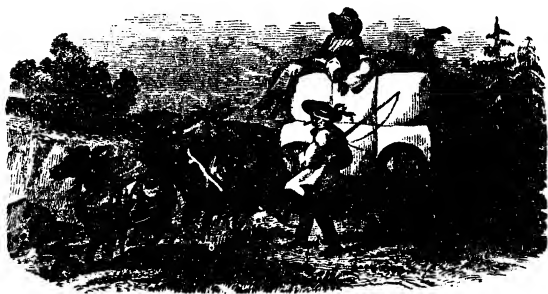
The State of South Carolina is one of the oldest and most noted States; its slave law describes slavery in these words: "Slaves shall be deemed, held, taken, reputed, and adjudged, in law, to be *chattels personal*, in the hands of their owners and possessors, and their executors, administrators and assigns, TO ALL INTENTS, CONSTRUCTIONS, AND PURPOSES, WHATEVER." The meaning of all this is, that slaves shall be regarded and treated in law as *property*; just as much property as the cattle of the fields; that they shall have owners just as much as the horses, and cattle, and other animals; that if their present owners die, they shall be held as property by the children or heirs of the owners, so that, unless the master chooses, they shall never be free; that they may be bought and sold and held as property; that wherever they may be, until they die, they shall be property. The law means to fix the

condition of the slave so that he can not, by any means or way, obtain his freedom unless his master chooses to free him.

The slave law of the State of Louisiana says: "A slave is one who is in the power of a master, *to whom he belongs*; the master may *sell him, dispose of his person, his industry, and his labor*; he can do nothing, *possess nothing, nor acquire* any thing, but what must belong to his master." And similar to this is the slave law in all the Slave States. You see from this, that a slave, by the law, belongs to his master just as much as his cattle; that he can sell him just as truly as he can sell his cattle; that he owns the body of the slave, and the soul that is in the body, just as long as it remains in his body. It is true that his right of property in the soul of the slave does not go into eternity, nor does his right of property in his cattle go there.

You can see that, by the slave law, the master owns the labor of the slave, and may sell it, or him ; that if the slave is industrious he is worth so much the more, not to himself, but to the master. If he is smart and quick at work, if he is ingenious in any art or trade, it is all the property and for the benefit of the master. The law does not give the good, willing, industrious slave the least profit or hope for being any better than others, only, he may not be whipped so much ; his master *may* not be so harsh and unkind and unjust with him. And yet the law does not shield him against such cruelties. The law gives the slave no wages, no better portion, no gain, no freedom, for being faithful and industrious. You see that the slave can do nothing, own nothing, get nothing, but what must belong to the master. If the master *gives* the slave any thing and still holds him a slave, the gift belongs to

the master. *Nobody* can give the slave any thing, not even a coat, or a pair of shoes, or a crust of bread, but it belongs to the master. Oh ! do you not cry out in your heart, “ Poor slave ? May God, the mighty God, deliver you from your bondage ! ”



XIII.

LAW IS THE MIND OF THE PEOPLE.

You may inquire, "Can it be that the people in the Slave States are as bad as their laws?" How did they get their laws, if the people did not make them? And did they not make such laws as they wanted? If you were permitted to make the laws of a town or State, would you not make such laws as you wished? The slave laws are oppressive and cruel, and they are just what the people who made them wanted. The people, that is the white people, voted that certain men of their number should go to the assembly or legislature of each State, and make laws for them. The slaves are not permitted to vote, and this is another wicked thing of slavery. The white peo-

ple make the laws to keep the slaves and all the children of slave mothers in bondage, and the colored people can say nothing about it. And the lawmakers meet in assembly or legislature, every year, and if the people wanted the slave laws done away, they could send men there who would repeal them. But they do not do this; so the slave laws express just the mind and wishes of the most, or of a great many, of the white people in the Slave States. Probably there may be some who in their hearts are opposed to slave laws, but do not dare to speak out and vote just as their feelings dictate. There are a few there who do speak against slavery, but they are much opposed and hated by many of the slaveholders; and some such friends of the slave are obliged to leave the Slave States and come to the Free ones. If they did not they would be in danger of being cruelly treated or killed.

XIV.

ARE THERE ANY KIND SLAVEHOLDERS?

You may have heard it said that there are some kind slaveholders. And you may be ready to ask if this is so. There are some slaveholders who are not so cruel to their slaves as the slave-laws would allow. They do not whip them as much as others do; and some perhaps not any at all. They feed and clothe them better than the law requires. They give them religious instruction, though some do it just to make them better slaves, so that they will work better and be worth more money. Some slaveholders will not sell slaves; some will not separate families; but they hold them as their property, and that you see, in itself, is very wrong. Can any one be really and fully kind to another

who holds and keeps him as property; who will not let him have his freedom; who will not pay him the full value of his labor; and when he dies leaves him to be the slave of his children or heirs? No! Good clothes and good food, and kind treatment, can not atone for all this. It is one of the most unkind of all things to hold and keep one of our fellow-beings as property; just as men keep horses, and cattle, and fowls, as property. This, I say, is a great evil in itself. Besides, the *example* of holding men as slaves is very hurtful; it helps to continue slavery. Such *kind* slaveholders, as they are called, generally have more *influence* than most of the more cruel slaveholders; just as respectable men, who drink wine or ale or brandy as a common or frequent drink, have more influence, and do more to keep up intemperance, than the greatest drunkards. Their example influences the young and

others to do as they do themselves. They begin to drink a little; then they drink more; and by and by many of them become intemperate. But the drunkard influences very few, if any, to drink, except those that are already drunkards, and would drink without his influence. Just so it is with the mischief which the *kind* slaveholders do. Their slavery is not so cruel, but its evil influence is far more wide-spread. Their kindness to their slaves becomes a power to do evil and to help on slavery. Were it not for such slaveholders, slavery could not long stand. It is to be feared that many of them do not realize how much they do to hold fast and long the fetters of the slave. They love to be called kind slaveholders. But, strange as it may seem, many of them are utterly unwilling to give up their slaves, and let them have that liberty which God has given as the right of every soul of

the human race. They are very bitter toward those who would have slavery abolished; that is, put away for ever. The wicked slave-laws suit their minds very well, and their hearts say, "Let the laws be." So you can see how much their kindness amounts to. Sin and evil will never come to an end by such means. This is not the way to have Christ's kingdom come, and his will be done in the earth as it is done in heaven.



XV.

A CASE OF SO-CALLED KIND SLAVE-
HOLDING.

I WILL now tell you of an instance of slaveholding that was called very kind, and where the slaveholder was much praised for his humanity to his slaves. Some years ago there lived in the State of Georgia, a wealthy slave-owner. He had a large plantation, a fine house, where he lived, barns and other out-houses, horses and carriages, and many slaves with the little houses where they lived. I have no doubt but in many things he endeavored to be kind to his slaves, and wanted to do them good. It may be that he thought he was taking the wisest and best course for their happiness and welfare. He endeavored to feed and clothe them comfortably; he

gave them comfortable little dwellings; he provided a physician and many comforts for them when they were sick; he tried to have them obtain some knowledge, and be truly moral and religious. He let many of them have patches of land to till for themselves, after they had done their day's or week's work on the plantation. And whatever they could raise upon these, they were allowed to use for food in their own little families, or to sell, and purchase with the money whatever they desired.

These slaves knew that they fared much better than many slaves in surrounding plantations, and they were less sorrowful than they. Still, some difficulties would arise among themselves, and some of them would do wrong. And in such cases the master would always have them settled, or attended to in this manner. He would select a number of the best and most intelligent

slaves on the plantation, to act as a jury in trying the case. He would himself sit as judge. When all was ready, the witnesses were called upon to tell what they knew in the case. And when all was learned about the difficulty, or crime, which could be learned, the judge would give some instructions to the jury, and they would consult with each other about it, and give their decision. Then the difficulty was settled, or the guilty slaves concerned in it were punished, just as the jury decided. This seemed all very well, and things went on quite pleasantly for years. Many people praised this slaveholder very much. Some said he was doing better by his slaves than he would to bring them to a free State, and give them their freedom. He may have thought that he would set them at liberty some day, but not yet. And his example went against the emancipation of slaves, and the putting

away of slavery. He did not pay his slaves according to all they earned. He held them still as his property.

And how did all this end? By and by this slaveholder was taken sick; every thing failed to help him, and he died. He left a widow and one child, a son of eleven years of age. His mother took him and came to the North; I suppose, for the purpose of being with friends and giving her child a good education. What became of the slaves? They were still in slavery, and doomed, for aught we can see, to be there all their remaining days, and their children after them. And now, instead of having their kind and careful master to rule over, and guide, and teach, and provide for them, they have overseers, like other plantation slaves at the South. And how much they will suffer from cruel treatment, how hard they will have to work, how many of them will be sold,

how many of those families will be broken up, how many little children will be torn away from their weeping parents, none but the eye of Heaven can see. When the son has become of age, he is to take the charge, if he pleases, of the plantation and of the slaves that may then be left. What kind of a master he will be, the Lord only knows. The slaves are slaves still; and for them there is but little hope in this life. Well for them if they seek the Lord with all their hearts, that they may have a portion with his true people in the skies, where they will suffer no more slavery for ever.

Children, would not the Lord teach us by this case, that no amount of kindness to the slaves, no easy work and good food and raiment, no little extra favors and privileges, no care or attention, can be sufficient reason or excuse for keeping them in slavery. Does not God teach us by this, that if a man or woman wakes

up in the morning, and finds himself the owner of slaves, he ought, before he ever sleeps again, to make some will, or execute some writing, so that if he should suddenly and unexpectedly die, his slaves would all be free?



XVI.

SLAVE-LAW TREATING A BOY AS PROPERTY.

SEVERAL years ago I went with my father to see the City of Washington, the Capital of the United States. We went to the presidential mansion, and saw the President at the Capitol, not *Capital*, the great building where Congress meets, and saw some of the law-makers of this land. They all seemed to love their freedom and greatness well, and were joyful with many hopes. But, children, there are often many evil things lying hid in the human heart when all is fair without. There are often many poor and suffering ones living in the shadow of the fashionable and proud, the wealthy and powerful. We remembered that there was a slave-pen in Washington, where they kept

human beings to sell for money. We turned away from the center of the city toward the Potomac river, and found it. The chief building seemed to have been once a dwelling-house for some family. In the rear was a long, low, wooden shed, where the slaves spent most of the day, and which was surrounded by a high close fence. We could hear the slaves, especially the children, from within. But outside the yard there was a fine looking colored boy, about twelve years of age. He had been sent out there to do some work with a hoe. We began to talk with him, but he kept on with his work, as though afraid to stop. He belonged in the slave-pen, and had been there about two weeks. He was to be sold to any one that would give enough money for him. And he was doomed, so far as any human eye could see, to be a slave to the day of his death. The expression of his face you could not

well describe, but some how it *would* make you feel pity for him. His eye was quick, mild, and quite intelligent for one of his poor advantages. His words were well spoken for such a boy, and his tone of voice had a peculiar power to find way to the tender feelings of your soul. If serious and thoughtful, as you stood and looked upon him, and heard him speak, and considered his worth of talent and character, and his probable fate, you could scarcely refrain from tears. We found that he had been brought from the western part of Virginia; that there he lived on the same plantation with his parents; that they loved him and he loved them; that they taught him to pray to God and to do right. We asked him why it was that he was sold, and he told us, in his honest unaffected way, that his master bought some cattle, and finally had some trouble to raise money enough to pay

for them; so he was sold to get some more money to pay for the cattle. Such, children, is the law of slavery, that makes property of human beings; not even the little boys and girls, not even the babies, escaping. We asked this boy if he felt badly to leave his parents and home. He said he did. We asked him how his mother felt to have him sold and taken away. He said that she cried when he left, and told him to be a good boy, and do as well as he could. We fervently repeated the good advice of his mother, and told him always to pray to God. Then fearing we might get into difficulty with the slave-traders, if they should see us in this conversation, we looked upon that dark but noble face, doubtless for the last time, until we meet it in the resurrection morning. His kindly, grateful eye followed after us as we turned away; but he still kept on at his toil, as a piece of

property, a slave. As we walked along, scarcely able for our grief to speak to each other, the thought was often in my mind, "that boy sold to pay for cattle;" and I have had a burning hatred of slavery ever since. He was not sold because his master was more cruel than many others. But the law gave him a wicked power over the boy. If he had failed to pay his debts, the law would have allowed the boy to be taken and sold for those debts, and the master could not help it if he kept him as his slave. Nobody has a right to hold another as property.*

* See Frontispiece.

XVII.

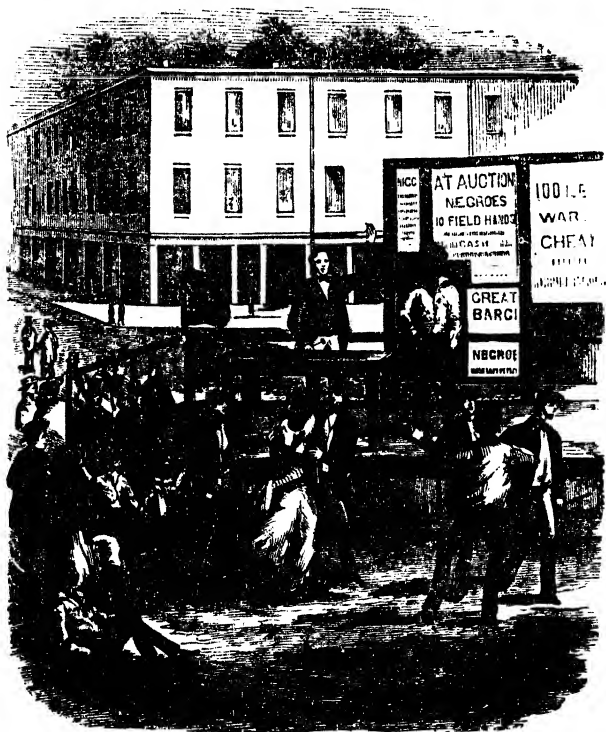
A SLAVE-FATHER TRYING TO GET AWAY
FROM SLAVE-LAW.

WHILE there in Washington, we found that one of the servants at our boarding-house was a slave. He was an active, intelligent-looking colored man, and we took occasion to make some inquiries of him, in regard to his own condition, and of slavery in general. He was not owned by the lady at whose house we stopped, but by a slave-owner in the city. He had made an arrangement with his master to pay him so much money every month. Then he would earn all he could, and after paying the monthly sum due his master, saved what was left to buy his freedom. His master asked for him, if I recollect, one thousand dollars. He had already saved

from his earnings two or three hundred dollars, and was anxious to have the years roll around, so that he could get the rest, and at last feel that he was free. He had set out in life with the plan to get his freedom, and have his family, if he should have any, free also. So he had married a free woman for his wife, and they had six children, that could not be made slaves, because their mother was free. His wife, by her prudence, and hard work at washing, had managed to support herself and all their children, so that all her husband could save might go to purchase his freedom. But we found that at the time we were there, this laborious and noble woman was in failing health, probably from her hard work and self-denial. And I thought, what if that woman has in this way ruined her health, and henceforth must look to her husband for her own support and that of their children also, when

will this poor man then get his freedom? And how, after that, did I almost begrudge myself the very food I ate in that house, that I might give it to that brave wife and her little ones, and so help her worthy husband out of slavery, and free herself and babes from its wide-spread and devouring curse. What right, thought I, has the owner of this slave to *his* earnings? Did not God make them both free? And why should the master's children fatten upon the fruits of the slave's toil, and the wife and children of the slave-father spend their days in pinching want, and the slave, perhaps, after all die a slave! And who knows but the master or his heirs afterward took away all the faithful slave had earned and saved? There is no law to prevent it. And who knows but the slave's wife at last died in the almshouse, because her husband could not command his earnings to support her? No law

prevents this. As we turned our faces homeward how did it weigh upon my heart, "such abominations as these in the City of Washington, the Capital of this land of boasted freedom!"



XVIII.

HOW SLAVERY LOOKS!

SOME people go to the South, and come back thinking that slavery is not so very bad after all. Others go there and return, only to hate and loathe it the more, and promising God that they will do all properly in their power to bring it to an end. What makes the difference? Some people, who were born and bred at the South, love slavery, and mean always to own slaves, and have them work for nothing, except their plain living. Others, who have always lived there, dislike slavery very much, and free their slaves. Sometimes they bring them to the North, and buy for them little farms, and help them to get settled. What makes the difference in the looks of slavery? Sometimes the

difference is in the eyes. Some see only the pleasant things; while some see all. Some look upon the surface; others look below it. Some see only the nice looking slaves about the slaveholders' fine houses and homes. Some go to see the retired fields of the plantations, where most of the slaves toil. Some believe just what the masters tell them about slavery. Others hear the story of the slaves also. But the difference is not always in the eyes and ears; often it is in the heart. Some people think it no matter if others *do* work for them without pay. They love slavery because it is quite pleasant and profitable to themselves. They can then live without work. They can be rich. They can do what pleases them best. Others look upon slaves as their fellow-beings, and try to love them as themselves. They are not willing to do unjustly. They wish to reward the laborer ac-

according to his services. They want others to have as many rights as they do themselves. Some persons look upon the bar-room, or beer-shop, or wine-cup, with very different feelings from those of others. Some turn their steps *toward* such things; others *from* them. Some thirst for them; others loathe them. The difference is away down in the heart.



XIX.

WHY SLAVES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO READ.

WHEN Frederick Douglass went to Baltimore to live, his new mistress was very kind to him. She was brought up at the North, and had not learned the way of slavery. She had a little son of her own that she loved very much, and she loved Frederick too; and Frederick used to feel very happy about it. He had had only one other grown person to love him since his poor mother died, which was when he was quite young. His new mistress, Mrs. Auld, saw how he felt, so she wished to please him still more, and do him good. She thought it would be a good thing to teach Frederick to read. She began, and he learned quite fast, and was much pleased with it. Mrs. Auld was glad, and one day she

told her husband what she was doing for Freddie, and how fast he was getting along, and that she meant to teach him to read the Bible. But what did Mr. Auld say and do? He forbade her teaching him any more, because, he said, it was unsafe and would spoil him. He gave his reasons in about these words, though I hope you will never repeat his naughty language: "If you give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell." "He should know nothing but the will of his master and learn to obey it." "Learning would spoil the best nigger in the world." "If you teach that nigger," meaning Douglass, "how to read the Bible, there will be no keeping him," "it would forever unfit him for the duties of a slave." "As to himself, learning would do him no good, but probably a great deal of harm, making him disconsolate and unhappy." "If you learn him how to read, he'll want to know how to write, and

this accomplished, he 'll be running away with himself." This, children, shows the reason why slave-laws forbid teaching the slaves to read, and why slave-owners so well obey the laws. They are afraid that if the slaves learn to read they will know so much about freedom and the free States that they will not be willing to be slaves, and will try to get away, or will be discontented, when they know how much they lose by being slaves, and will not be worth so much to labor. Besides, in learning to read they will learn the letters of the alphabet, and so be the more easily able to learn to write. Then they could write a pass or permission, to go somewhere, as if from their master, and so could get away to a free land. Therefore, slaveholders think they must keep their slaves ignorant, that they may the more easily keep them in bondage. Children, is not slavery one of the wickedest things you ever heard of?

XX.

A LITTLE SCHOOL FOR THE SLAVE
CHILDREN.

A GOOD lady of my acquaintance, some years since, went to the South to engage in teaching the children of some white people. While there, she saw so many of the colored children without schools, and without needful instruction to make them the most useful and happy, that her heart often ached with pity for them. So she thought she would try and have a little Sunday school for the colored children on the Sabbath day. She succeeded in getting the permission of two or three of the masters to have their slave children in her Sunday school. She did not try, I believe, to teach them to read, for she knew it would not be allowed. She went on for a time very


well, and taught the children some scripture verses, and some little hymns, and other good things, and told them about God, and heaven and hell; and the children were very glad to have the school.



But some of the slaveowners near by began to be afraid that all this instruction would get to their own slaves, and make them discontented; so they said so much against it, that the slaveholders who first gave permission to have the

Sunday school, took back their consent, and the school was stopped, much to the grief of the good lady and her little colored Sunday school scholars. Poor children! who will teach them, and what will become of them? May the Lord Jesus send the Holy Spirit to their hearts and make them holy, so that when they die, they may go and dwell for ever with the Lord.

Some masters would not have been so cruel. But the law forbids teaching the slaves to read or write, or to learn other things as you do in school; and the slaveholders are generally very particular to have the law obeyed. They are afraid they would get into some kind of difficulty if they were not. You can see for yourselves, that it is a very wicked law.



XXI.

SLAVERY LAWS AGAINST EDUCATION.

PERHAPS you would like to know a little more about the laws in Slave States against teaching the slaves any of the studies of a school education. Children and youth in most parts of the country are so much encouraged to go to school and learn all they can, that it seems almost impossible there should be any laws against it, even for the slaves.

In the state of Virginia, all meetings of slaves, or free negroes, or mulattoes, associating with slaves, are forbidden by law, if held at any meeting-houses or other houses in the night, or at any school or schools for teaching them reading or writing, either in the day-time or the night; and every one attending any such meeting, may be punished with a

whip, twenty lashes or less. The slaves in that State, you see, can not attend even a *religious* meeting in the evening of any one of the seven days of the week. And it is unlawful for any white person to meet with the slaves, to teach them to read or write. A lady was recently shut up in one of the prisons of that State, and kept there a long time because she taught the negro children and youth.

In North Carolina it is forbidden to teach any slave to read or write, or to sell him any book, even the Bible, or any pamphlet; and if a free negro break this law, he is punished with thirty-nine lashes or imprisonment; if a white person break it, he is finable two hundred dollars.

In South Carolina there is a law against teaching any slave to *write*, or causing one to be taught to write, or employing any slave to write for any

purpose whatever; and he who does teach or employ a slave thus, is finable to the amount of one hundred pounds, nearly five hundred dollars. And in that State all assemblies of slaves or negroes or mulattoes, in any confined or secret place, for the purpose of mental instruction, are forbidden; and the magistrates are ordered to enter all such places and break up the meetings; and they may inflict twenty lashes upon the slaves, or negroes, that may have assembled, to deter them from meeting in future. Slaves and free negroes are also forbidden to meet with any white persons for any kind of mental instruction, *or for religious worship*, either before the rising of the sun, or after its setting.

In Georgia, if a white person teach a free negro or slave to write, he is fined five hundred dollars, and imprisoned as long as the Court may please; if a colored man, bond or free, do the

same, he may be whipped or fined as the court please. A similar law forbids teaching a slave, negro, or free person of color, to read.

In Louisiana, if one teaches slaves to read or write, the law requires him to be punished by confinement in prison one year.

Of course in all these States a slave, or negro, or mulatto, may not teach his own child, or brother, or sister, to read or write; nor even to write his own name or to read the Bible. In the Free States, sometimes little children, having learned to read at the district or Sunday school, go home and read their books or lessons to their parents; in some cases they even teach their parents to read themselves, especially when they have come from a foreign land, and have never before learned to read in our language. The parents are always glad to have such children. But slave children may not do that for their parents. Slave

parents have no such pleasure. They may long and pray for it. God does not refuse it, but man does.

All such education is forbidden by the laws of nearly all the Slave States. And where there is no law against the mental instruction of the slaves, or free negroes, as in Kentucky, and perhaps Maryland, the *practice*, even in these States almost every where, is such as exists in the States that have laws against it. The Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky, a body of ministers and others of the Presbyterian Churches, said in the year 1834, "Slavery dooms thousands of human beings to *hopeless ignorance*." They said that in all the State, so far as they knew, there was only one school where slaves could be taught during the week; and that there were only three or four Sabbath schools for slaves. They said, "Slavery deprives its subjects in a great measure of the privileges of the gospel." "The law,

as it is here, does not prevent free access to the Scriptures; but ignorance, the natural result of their condition, does. The Bible is before them, but it is a sealed book. Very few of them enjoy the advantages of a regular gospel ministry."—See Goodell's American Slave Code.

In Virginia, Georgia, and Mississippi, if any free colored person undertakes to preach or conduct any religious meeting, by day or night, he may be whipped, not exceeding thirty-nine lashes. If any slave or free colored person attends such meeting, he may be punished in the same way. If a slave listens to a white preacher in the evening, he may also be whipped. A *slave* may preach, but only on the plantation of his master, and to none but the slaves of his own master.

Can an institution which needs and makes such laws as these, be any thing else than an utter abomination in the sight of Heaven?

XXII.

OUGHT ANY BODY TO OBEY A WICKED LAW?

CHILDREN, the answer to this question is plain. Wicked laws are not God's laws, because all his laws are good. The Bible says "the law of the Lord is perfect." "The statutes of the Lord are right." "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good." And now shall we obey the commands of *men* when they are *wicked*? The Lord tells us to do no wicked thing. And so when man's law requires us to do any wrong thing, we ought not to do it. And this is the way that God's true servants have always done. I presume you know how the prophet Daniel got into the lions' den. It was because he prayed to God when king Darius made a law that he should not. And you know how well

it turned out with Daniel because he obeyed God and not the king.

So the apostles Peter and John, once, as they were preaching, were commanded by the great council of the Jews not to speak any more of the things of Christ. But they "answered and said unto them, whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God judge ye." So they went on preaching as God had told them, and disobeying the wicked law of the Jewish council. They were taken by the officers of the government, and accused of disobedience to the rulers. "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said. We ought to obey God rather than men." Now you can see it is a wicked thing to hold and treat human beings as property. Then nobody ought to do it. But in some Slave States, they have laws forbidding any body to give his slaves their liberty in those States.

And if they do, the slaves are taken and sold into slavery again. So if the wicked laws are not put away, the slaveowners ought to take their slaves out of the State and there set them at liberty, and do as well for them as they can. And the wicked laws which forbid teaching the slaves to read ought not to be obeyed. The masters ought to go out of such States, or refuse to stay there and hold slaves and obey that wicked law.



XXIII.

HAVE THE MASTERS A RIGHT TO THEIR
SLAVES?

SOME people say that the masters have just as much right to the slaves, as a man has to his horse or cow that he bought and paid his money for. Let us see!

The first slaves in this land were brought from Africa. Some of them were stolen there, some were taken prisoners in war, and then sold to the slave traders. And the wars were generally made by the negro chiefs or their friends, for the purpose of catching their fellow-men, and then selling them for money, or other things. Certainly it is wrong to *steal* men. And when they are taken prisoners in war, that does not give a right to hold or sell them into slavery.

So the slave traders had no right to the slaves, because those of whom they purchased them had no right to them. Suppose a man comes and steals your father's horse, and riding him off into the next town, sells him for money. Is he not your father's horse still? What if the man who bought him should say "he is *my* horse, I paid my money for him," would that be true? No, the thief had no right to your father's horse, and therefore he could not *sell* any right to him. Just so it is with slavery. Nobody had any right to steal, or take, or sell slaves in the *first* place. Therefore they did not belong to the men in this country who bought them.

But those who purchased them died, and left the slaves to their children. The parents had no right to them, therefore the children had no right to have them for *their* slaves. And the grandchildren had no right to them, for the

children had not. And *nobody* ever had any right to the poor slaves that were cruelly stolen or taken in Africa and sold into slavery.

But those first slaves also died and left children. Now, as nobody had a right to hold the *parents* as slaves, so, no one had a right to hold the *children* as slaves. If a thief steals a good old hen that lays eggs, and finally hatches some chickens, does that make the chickens his? And nobody has a right to hold in slavery the grandchildren or great-grandchildren of the slaves.

But all the slaves in this country were stolen or taken in Africa or elsewhere, or else their forefathers were, and so there are no slaves here in all the Slave states that any body has a right to hold in bondage. Then, what a great mass of wickedness slavery must be.

XXIV.

SHALL WE MAKE MEN SLAVES TO MAKE
THEM GOOD?

“SHALL we continue in sin that grace may abound?” Rom. 6: 1-3. This last question was once asked by an apostle. He answered, “God forbid.” He had been “slanderosly reported” by some to say, “Let us do evil that good may come.” Some people have said that stealing men in Africa, and bringing them to this land, and selling them into slavery, has been to them a great blessing. That it has brought them to an enlightened and gospel land, where some of them have become christians. But which has been the good part? the stealing and enslaving part, or the gospel part? Which has been the good? man’s wickedness, or God’s goodness? Was it

at all necessary that the African people should be stolen and sold into slavery in order to give them the gospel? Suppose it had all been love and kindness on the part of men, and no sin, would not the gospel have spread far more? Suppose as much time, and life, and money, had been spent to carry them the gospel, and to instruct them in all good things, as have been spent to enslave them and keep them in ignorance and bondage in this enlightened land, would it not have been as much better as you can imagine? What, if instead of stealing them and forcing them to come here, they had just been made acquainted with us, and then invited and helped to come to our land, and been treated as brothers, not as slaves? Stealing and enslaving heathen, and then keeping them in ignorance, and not allowing them even to read the word of God, in order to make them christians, is "doing evil that good

may come." That God forbids. Joseph's brethren sold him into slavery, and he was taken down into Egypt. Long after, in time of great famine, Joseph's brethren and all his father's large family came down to Egypt for food, and received a bountiful supply because Joseph was there. But could not the Almighty God have provided them with food if Joseph's brethren had not treated him so wickedly? And now suppose somebody should begin to praise their wickedness, and say that it was a great blessing, and that God could not get along without it. Shall we praise sin because God overrules it, and does good in spite of it? Who did the good, Joseph's brethren or God? Children, what do you think of praising slavery for the good that God does in *spite* of it, or in connection with it.

XXV.

DOES THE OLD TESTAMENT UPHOLD
SLAVERY?

CHILDREN, slavery is very anxious to stand; so, sometimes it goes and puts its ugly head somewhere between the leaves of the Bible, and thinks it is all safe; just as the ostrich, when pursued on the sand deserts, runs and puts its head beneath a leaf or a stone, or in the sand, and thinks its great body and long legs are all hid. Some slaveholders and their friends say that the Bible is all on their side. Well, let us see if the Old Testament sustains them.

1. *Stealing men forbidden.*—You may read in the Book of Exodus, 21 : 16, the word of the Lord as follows: “He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he

be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." You see from this, that if anybody stole a person from any place, and sold him to be a slave or any thing else, even for a little while, he was put to death as a punishment. And if it is wrong to steal a man and sell him, then it is wrong to buy him after he is stolen. If one man does wickedly to steal a horse, another man does wickedly if he knows it and then buys the stolen horse. But the slaves in this land were first stolen from Africa, and the present slaves are their children. Now if it is wicked to steal the parents and make them slaves, is it not wicked to make their children slaves. If a man steal a sheep, does that give him a right to have the sheep's lambs?

2. *Servants equal with their masters.*—

The Jews in Old Testament times had servants, just as many people now

have hired servants. But they were not like the slaves in this land. Sometimes they had their fellow Hebrews for servants. Sometimes they went to the heathen around, and hired servants to come and live with them many years if they should like to stay. Sometimes it is called buying them. These servants from the heathen were called *strangers* for some time after they came to live with the Jews. And God's law in regard to the treatment of strangers was as follows: "The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself." Lev. 19 : 34. So the servants were to be unto them as their own neighbors or children. "Thou shalt not oppress a stranger, for ye know the heart of a stranger." Ex. 23 : 9. They were to pity the strangers, and love and treat kindly and never oppress them. But are the slaves in this land treated

as neighbors and children and friends? If they were, would they not be allowed to learn to read and write, to go to school, have property of their own, not be sold, and have the liberty of going away if they chose, when they had stayed as long as they agreed to? Were the Hebrew servants then like American slaves?

3. *Servants had much free time and many privileges.*—The Jews had a great many meetings and national and religious festivals, which their servants had the privilege of attending. They had also many *family* meetings and festivals; and the Lord required that the heads of the households should have all the *servants*, as well as their children, present. So that the servants did not have to stay at home and work, or toil in the fields, while others of the family were at a festival. They had privileges just

like the rest. The Jews were commanded to love them as themselves. In the course of a number of years, the servants had nearly half of all the time, besides the time that they slept, in which they did not have to work. So, they could learn and improve, and have things of their own, and have their own little families, just as they pleased. They were only to work some according to agreement.

4. *Hebrew servants could own property.* Slave law in this land says that the slave "can do nothing, nor acquire any thing but what must belong to his master." But with the Jews there was no law to prevent the servants from acquiring and holding property. The Hebrew servant could redeem himself from out of the money (or wages,) that he was bought (or hired) for, which shows that he might have money or other property.

And we find that on one occasion, when Saul wished to make a present to Samuel, and had no money with him, the servant that was present had money, and offered his master some. I Sam. 9 : 8. This makes some difference between Hebrew Slavery and American Slavery. The latter *is* slavery, the other is *not*.

5. *Servants could dissolve their contract.* When any of the Hebrews engaged to be servants for the term of six years, they were paid their wages in advance, before the service commenced. But if afterwards they wished to recall their engagement, and go away, they had the privilege to do so by paying back the wages they had not yet earned. This was called redeeming themselves. And if they had spent or lost all their money, or a part of it, so that they had not enough, any relative or friend could redeem them, and they could go away free.

Lev. 25: 48-50. When they redeemed themselves each might do it, it is said, "out of the money that he was bought for," that is, the money he was hired for and paid in advance. But the slaves in our Slave States are not paid any wages; so they ought, at least, to have the privilege of going away from their masters, whenever they please. Yet they can not. If their friends who enjoy freedom wish to buy them out of slavery, the masters may refuse to sell, or they may ask so much that they can not be bought. If the slaves could go away, as the Hebrew servants could, what a flight there would be! unless the principle of *hired* service, wages for labor, were adopted by the masters. That would be the Bible principle, which all ought to practice.

6. *Servants going back to their old homes.*—When the Jews obtained servants from the heathen nations, the Lord

required them to treat those servants very kindly, and to win them over from heathenism to the true religion if they could. If the servants desired they could become Jews, and make a covenant with God, and stay in Israel as long as they lived. But an ancient and noted Jewish writer, (Maimonides,) tells us that if such a servant did not like at first to remain in the Hebrew country, then he was to stay one year on trial. It was the duty of his master "to bear with him, to seek to win him over by instruction, and by love and kindness, for one year. After which, should he *refuse* so long, it is forbidden to keep him longer than a year. And the master must send him back to the strangers from whence he came." Does this look like American Slavery? Can the slaves in this country leave their masters after one year if they choose? No, they can never leave them without the masters' consent.

There is no way by which a slave can get his freedom unless his master chooses to let him go. Even if he lets his slave earn money to buy his liberty with, the master can afterwards take it all away from him; and this is sometimes done.

7. *Runaway slaves not to be returned.*

“Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place where he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best; thou shalt not oppress him.” Deut. 23: 15, 16. This applied at least to all the slaves that ran away from their masters in other countries and came to the Jewish land. It may have applied to the Hebrew *servants* also if there were any occasion for it. But there is no reason to suppose that the Hebrew servants were ever so badly treated that they wished to go

away from their masters. As soon as the year of Jubilee came they could *all* go away. But this command, not to return the servant that had left his master, shows that the Lord does not regard the master as having any right to his servant, to make him a slave. If the servant were the property of the master, then it would be right that he should have his property back again. And with hired servants, if the masters treat them wrongfully they have a right to go away, and none has a right to return them.

But in this land there is a wicked law that the master, or other men, may seize the slave "which is escaped from his master," and force him back again into slavery. Then he is generally cruelly punished for going away, and fares much worse than ever before. The government even gives money to *reward* those who return the fugitive slave to his

master, just as some wicked Jews gave money to Judas, to induce him to betray the Redeemer of sinners into their murderous hands.

8. *No children born to Slavery in Judea.*—Among the Jews the children of servants were never regarded as slaves. The children of Hebrew and heathen servants were all treated alike. They were all considered as members of the master's family, were admitted to all religious privileges, and were educated as the rest. In some cases it was the rule that they should remain in the master's family until the year of Jubilee, when all went and lived where they pleased. The mother's term of service, for which she had engaged, then closed, and her children went with her, or, if they had become of age, they made engagements to live with their parents' master or elsewhere, as they chose. The children

were never sold or bought; they were never treated as property.

But in American Slavery all the children of slave-mothers are slaves from their earliest moments. They are not trained and educated as the children of the master, or as members of the master's family. The law forbids teaching them any branches of even a common school education. They are trained to be slaves, and the master's children are trained to be their masters. The children may be sold and held as property. They may be sold away from their parents, where they will never see or hear from them or their brothers and sisters again; and in most Slave States they may be sold at an early age, even before they can speak or walk alone.

9. *Servants among the Jews could not be purchased.*—When we speak of purchasing or buying any thing, we mean

that we pay for it, so that it becomes our property. We can then sell it again if we choose, or give it away for nothing. It is ours to use in any proper way that we please. Servants among the Hebrews were never purchased in that way. All the language of the Old Testament about buying them for money, means only paying for their services until the year of Jubilee, when they all went free. The money paid to, or for a servant, was *wages* for his services, not the *price* for him as property. Even those who were made servants as a punishment for theft or some other wickedness, as the Lord commanded to be done to some of the Canaanites, were not sold or purchased to be *slaves*; only their *labor* or *services* were bought until the year of Jubilee. It was with the Jews, in regard to this, just as it was with some of the early settlers of Virginia. Some poor people in England wished to come to America,

but they had nothing to pay their passage with, or for their food and clothing while on their journey; so, some ship-masters would take them on board their vessels and bring them to Virginia, and then *sell* them, as it was called, for enough to pay their passage and support during the voyage. Then these poor people would work for those that bought them, as many months or years as was necessary to reward their masters for the money that they had paid for them. After that they always went free. So also, some persons condemned for crimes in England, were sent to this country as a punishment, and sold for a few years to any one who would pay a certain amount for their labor during that time. After those few years had passed they went free. Such persons were often advertised for *sale* in the newspapers of Virginia at that day. And yet it was not a real sale of them as property, only

their *services* were sold and bought. They were clearly debtors to their masters for the cost of their immigration to this country. They were not slaves; they were not property; their children were not slaves; they were freemen paying a debt; or, they were criminals suffering punishment. And very much like this was the system of service among the Jews. Their servants were not purchased as property; only their *services* were purchased until the year of Jubilee.

But the American slave *is* property. He is not acknowledged by the master, or the slavelaws, as having any right at all to any part of his services. He can not sell them; he can not give them away; he never owned them; he has no acknowledged right to use them for his family or friends; no day of Jubilee waits for him but that of his death. The master does not buy the services of the slave; he buys the slave himself,

and is allowed to hold him as long as he chooses.

10. *Servants among the Jews could not be Sold.*—The Lord gave a law to the Jews that no Hebrew servant should be sold: “They shall not be sold as bondmen.” Lev. 25: 42. The principle of this law applied also to servants obtained from the heathen. Among *other* nations of that day, servants were *sold as slaves*. God knew the wickedness of it, and forbade it among his professed people. There is no proof that any of the Jews ever sold a person except in one instance; that was the case of Joseph being sold by his brethren to the Ishmaelites. That act is always spoken of in the Bible as very wicked. The Lord sent judgments upon Joseph’s brethren for their crime. There was no law among the Jews by which they could ever give their servants to pay their debts, or as pledges for the fulfillment

of any agreement. No law allowed them to give away their servants as presents, or even to hire or give them out to others, to be returned again.

With American slavery the master *can* sell his slave; he can hire him to others for wages; he can give him away to be the slave of somebody else as long as he lives. He does not have to ask the slave if he is willing. The slave must go if the master wills it. All his wages the master can take and put into his own pocket. The slave can not claim enough to buy a single garment, or a crust of bread, or a bowl of milk. He may be sold whenever the master may choose. The slave may have some wish as to who shall buy him; but the master is not bound to regard the slave's desire at all. The slave may wish not to go into an unhealthy part of the country, or where he will have to do the hardest kind of work. But it makes no

difference. The slave must go wherever the purchaser chooses to take him. Is there, then, no difference between being an American slave and a servant of the Hebrews?

11. *Servants among the Jews were never held as property.*—You see that the servants of the Jews were not treated as property. They received a great many benefits from the master, just as the apprentice does from his master. They belonged to the family, and had the same privileges as the other members; even more, sometimes, than some of the kindred and friends. They could learn useful knowledge and improve all they would. They could have property themselves. They could not be sold. If any one stole them, the man-stealer could be put to death.

But I wish you to consider, a little more, one other particular reason, showing that they were never held as prop-

erty. It is reason enough of itself. They could be held as servants *only for a limited time, not always*.

The master had property in the *services* of the servant, just as parents have property in the services of their children, or the master in the labor of the apprentice. But servants were not their property any more than children are the property of parents, or apprentices or *hired* servants are the property of their masters. If the servants of the Jews could have been held *always*, and been sold and treated as the master chose, then they would have been property. If they could have been held always, that would have implied that the rights of servants were all extinguished,—taken away. And it would have meant that the master had full power over his slave, as he had over his dumb beasts. In all the history of slavery, whenever men could hold their servants *always*, and

there was no way of relief or freedom for them, then they have been slaves. But whenever any of the Jews became servants, the law forbade them to hire out for more than six years at a time. The seventh year they must be free. If they wished, they could make agreement to stay another six years. But they could not be compelled to do so. And they could be redeemed if they or their friends chose to do it, before the full time had passed. And the servants that the Jews hired or bought from the heathen, beside having about half of their time for their own improvement and welfare, and beside having the privilege of going back to their former people, after one year, if they chose, could not be kept as servants beyond forty-nine years. Every fiftieth year all must go free and do what they chose, only obeying God. “And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, *and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all*

the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and every man unto his family." Lev. 25: 10. If this one command of God should be obeyed in all the slave States of this country, slavery would soon come to an end. But alas! now the poor slaves must remain in bondage all their days, and their children and children's children must share the same fate. No hope for this life; no bright spot shows itself in their horizon; but all is work, work, bondage, bondage, until their bodies drop into their graves, and their spirits return unto God who gave them.

But if laws should be passed to make all the American slaves like the Hebrew servants, the moment the laws took effect, all the slaves in this land would become like the apprentices and the children not yet of age. Nearly half of their time would be their own. They

would be treated kindly and justly. They would be taught many useful things; they would have their schools, and books, and all that free people have. They would have food, and clothing, like their masters, and would be taken into the families of the slaveholders, and live as themselves. They would not be hired out any more, and often to cruel persons. They would not be sold any more. And husbands and wives, and parents and children, would no more be separated from each other and driven off to strange parts of the land, and they would not, unless they chose, have to remain much longer with their present masters. Being born in this land, they would not have to be as the slaves of the Hebrews that came from the heathen. The *seventh* year at the farthest, would make them completely free. They have as much right in this land as anybody, and would then be treated as the

Hebrew born, not as the "strangers," among the Jews? O, that such a day might come for four millions of slaves!



XXVI.

DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT UPHOLD
SLAVERY?

If the Old Testament does not sanction or support real slavery, is it probable the New Testament does? We read that the new covenant is better than the old. Would the introduction or support of slavery by the New Testament be any improvement upon the doctrines of the old?

1. *All races of men, brethren.*—Children, the New Testament laid the axe at the root of the tree. It taught a spirit, the spirit of Christ, which, if received into the hearts of men, drives away the whole spirit of slavery. We can not love our fellow-men as Christ loved us, and ever have the wish to

make or hold any one of the human race as real slaves. We shall then love him as ourselves. And surely *we* do not wish to be slaves. God “hath made *of one blood* all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” Acts 18: 26. God hath given us equal rights, and made us to be brethren. If we are not vicious and hurtful to mankind, we have a right to our freedom. We are all of one blood, and no one has a “thus saith the Lord” for enslaving his fellow-man.

2. *Servants with unconverted masters.*

—The epistles, or letters of the New Testament, are all to Christian Churches. So when servants are addressed, we may infer that they were professing christians. Some of these servants had christian masters, and some had masters that were yet in their sins. Some of the New Testament language to servants was to those whose masters were unconverted.

Such servants were, doubtless, still held in real slavery. But they were exhorted not to be too much grieved by it, but to think of their portion in heaven, as the servants and joint heirs of Christ. Slavery in this case was spoken of as an evil, as a thing that naturally led the slaves to be sorrowful. But they were encouraged under the trial, and told to "care not for it." 1 Cor. 7:21. They were spoken of as being "under the yoke," and were commanded to be obedient to their masters, "*in singleness of heart as unto Christ*;" "with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men;" "counting their masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." 1 Tim. 6:1. Titus. 2:9. Eph. 6:5-7. Such servants were appointed of God to recommend the precious gospel, by their holy lives, to their impenitent, unbelieving masters. It was the hope that *they* too would be

converted. If these servants were fretful, impudent, unfaithful, disobedient, what would their masters think of the religion they professed? The command to obey their masters does not mean that the masters had a *right* to hold them in slavery. But the servants were in slavery and could not help it. And while God allowed them to be thus situated, they were to act as christians; "that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed."

3. *Servants with converted masters.*—The New Testament expressly speaks of some servants as having "believing masters." "And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit." 1. Tim. 6:2.

You may see from this that when

both masters and servants were converted, the relation was to be regarded in a different light from that when the master was not a christian. The servant generally remained, perhaps, with the believing master. There was seldom occasion for his going away. But he did not remain as a real slave, to be held and treated as property; to be sold away among the heathen, or any where else; to be robbed of his wages; but he remained as a brother, because they were brethren. A real brother could not, and would not, treat his brother as property. The servant was to do service to his master while he remained with him, for he would be more or less dependent upon him for his support; and because the master also was a christian, "faithful and beloved," and "partaker of the benefits of the great salvation." But, my readers, it can not be found in the New Testament, that the christian masters

were allowed, or had it in their hearts, to treat their servants as real slaves. A servant with a christian master was the same as free; he was as a hired servant, and received that which was "just and equal."

4. *Masters giving their servants that which is just and equal.*—There is no language in the New Testament, which implies in the least that masters had a right to hold or treat their servants as property. One command to masters is this: "*Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal*, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven." Col. 4: 1. What! Can a master give his servant nothing but food and clothing, and that not the best, and yet be said to "render to him that which is just and equal?" Is it just and equal for the master to laze and play, and the slave to toil, and then the master take all the

gains of the slave, and the slave himself have nothing but the plainest fare? Is it just and equal for the master to hold his servant in bondage? If so, why may not the slave turn around and hold the master in bondage? Is it just and equal for the children of the master to enjoy schools, and academies, and colleges, and all the advantages of a civilized land, and the children of the slave not be allowed to read the Bible, lest it be not so easy to keep them slaves? Is it just and equal for one man to traffic in the bodies and souls of his fellow-men? Treat the slave ever so well; do not sell him, give him food and comfortable raiment, be kind as you may, but yet treat him as the laws of slavery require, still hold him as *property*, and is that just and equal? Children, do not your burning, slavery-loathing hearts give these questions the answers of truth and justice?

“Knowing that ye also have a master in heaven.” And what kind of a master is God? Does he ever do otherwise than just and equal? Does he treat human beings as slaves? Does he make them toil without pay? Does he live upon the gains of their labor? He is, indeed, a God of justice. He is a master who will by no means clear the guilty. But punishing the sinner is not making him a slave. And wo to all those who do not render “that which is just and equal” to all men.

5. *God no respecter of persons.*—There is only one other verse in the New Testament addressed directly to masters, as such. It is this: “And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your master also is in heaven; *neither is there respect of persons with him.*” Eph. 6: 9. Parents should govern their children,

and masters their apprentices and servants. Neither children nor servants should complain of kind, though strict government. Those who govern should do it, knowing that they have a governor in the heavens. But the idea or fact of government does not give the right to *enslave*. That is another thing. There is no respect of persons with God. He does not give the parent or master any advantage over the child or servant. He does not give the master any permission to do that with the servant which is not just and equal. He does not allow him to make the servant labor without pay, or treat him as property, or sell him to another, or take away his children. Nor does he allow one to hold another in a state of danger of such things a single day. But this is done even by many who are called kind slaveholders, because they do not take the most speedy steps to cause their slaves to be free.

6. *Keeping back the hire of the laborers.*

—One of the principles of justice laid down in the New Testament is this; that he who labors for another should receive wages equal in value to his labor. “The laborer is worthy of his hire.” Luke. 10 : 7. “The laborer is worthy of his reward.” 1 Tim. 5 : 18. It is highly wicked for any one even to *desire* another to labor for him for less than the real value of his services, unless he is in such circumstances of want that he may properly desire some one to work for him as a voluntary gift. And surely the three hundred and fifty thousand slave-holders of this land are not in such a needy condition, that they may properly ask the charity of all the toils of the nearly four millions of slaves that they hold in bondage. If they really want all the labor of all these slaves, they ought to ask for it as a gift, and not take it by robbery. Certainly, if any body may go a *begging*,

the slaves might better beg of the slaveholders, than the slaveholders of the slaves. And the slaves should first have *justice* before being driven to beggary.

In the epistle of James, fifth chapter, the Lord arrays some of the sins of the rich in those days. They had hoarded property, they had lived for "pleasure," they had withheld the wages of the laborers, they had "condemned and killed the just." "Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." "The Lord of Sabaoth" means, "the Lord of hosts." The wrongs which the rich had done by defrauding the laborers and keeping back their wages, cried unto the Lord of hosts for punishment. And he will by no means clear the guilty.

Keeping back the hire of the laborers?

In this consists one of the great wrongs of slavery. It is the chief thing for which slavery exists.

If slave-holders were to pay their slaves a fair sum for their labors, if they could not keep back a part of their hire, if they and their families could not live on the unpaid toil of their slaves, if they had to render unto them all that is just and equal, if they paid them just as much as they would have to pay hired servants, then why should they want slaves any more? Slavery would end. Slavery, children, is for this very purpose, to make the slave earn enough by his toil to support himself and his master too; himself poorly, his master well. It is to save slave-holders and their children from earning their bread by the sweat of their brow. It is to keep them in indolence, and let them hoard up riches, earned by the toughened and sun-burnt hands of others. It is to let them

loll and revel amid their pleasures, and afford them a full supply of servants whom they can command as they please, and yet without pay. Such is Slavery! Do you think the New Testament sanctions it? Be assured, the cries of the defrauded laborers have entered into the ears of the Lord of hosts, and call for punishment.

7. *Loving others as ourselves.*—Jesus Christ has taught us to love all men as we love ourselves. “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Matt. 22 : 39. We are not to love our friends merely, but our enemies also, and all the human race.

Now, do the slaveholders love themselves in so strange a manner that they want to be made slaves? If they do, they can easily find wicked men enough who would like to have them all for slaves. But nobody loves to be a slave. Then nobody should make others slaves.

Again; the Saviour said, "and as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." Luke, 6: 31. Children, no one should hold another as a slave unless he wishes to be held a slave himself. And whoever does hold his fellowmen in real slavery, disobeys the Son of God. For no one wishes others to make him a slave. Nor would he wish to be made a slave, if he were just as poor and ignorant as any of the slaves themselves. No one of the human race *ought* to wish, or be willing, to be held a slave. Many do wish, and ought to wish, to be hired servants, for that is the best, for a time at least, they can do. We all ought to wish to be servants of the Lord. But God does not wish any one to be his *slave*. He will not have any body for his slave. And none of his creatures should wish to have a slave; none should wish to *be* a slave; none *do really* wish to be a slave.

The command to love our neighbor as ourselves, is the second of the two great commandments; and he who breaks it and does not repent, must give a most solemn account to God, and be punished according to his great sin.

8. *Slaves should get free if they can.*—There is one more Scripture text on this subject which should be considered. It is addressed to slaves, and doubtless to those whose masters were unconverted. It tells them how to feel in regard to their condition, and how to do if they should ever have an opportunity to leave it. “Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be free, use it rather.” 1 Cor. 7: 21. “Art thou called,” that is, dost thou become a christian while being a servant. “Care not for it.” Do not be dissatisfied, or oversorrowful with your lot. “But if thou mayest be free, use it rather.” If you

may be free, *then be free*. Get your freedom if you can, by proper means. It does not tell them to take the lives of their masters, or to do injustice to any by trying to get their freedom. But it clearly implies that freedom is far better than slavery; that it is better for *any* slave. No exceptions are made. It does not say that some should get their freedom and others should remain in slavery. It says to every slave, If thou mayest get thy freedom, then do not neglect to get it? It is a direction and divine command to all slaves to be free if they can. Is not the New Testament Anti-Slavery? And who can blame a slave that is delving out his years in bondage, *if he walks off with himself into freedom*.

Some have strangely said that the Bible directs the fugitive slave, Onesimus, to return to his master, Philemon. Now the fact is, there is no sound proof that

Onesimus was ever a slave at all. But if he were, how was he sent back? The Scripture answers; "*Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, both in the flesh, and in the Lord.*" Phil. 16. He was not sent back as a *slave*, nor even as a *servant*, but he *was* sent back as a *brother* in two relations, in the flesh, and in the Lord. And could he have been a brother in one relation and not in another? A brother at church and a slave at home? Can a brother, with a brother's love, hold a brother in slavery? Such is not the religion of Christ. A doctrine of brotherhood that can allow one to be the property of another, one to toil at another's choice and for his benefit, without just and equal reward, is not the love for brethren taught in the Bible. Such a doctrine will every-where call forth nothing but pity, or ridicule and contempt. No! the brotherly affection among the Bible saints

was so pure and winning that it often called out the exclamation from high and low, from princes and subjects, "How these christians love one another!" Love, wherever it exists is still the same; instead of loving slavery, it loathes it.



XXVII.

A LOOK AT SLAVERY FROM THE DEATH
BED.

It is always well for us, children, to consider how any thing would seem to us, if we were to lie down upon our beds and die. When people come to die, if they have their reason, they generally see things as they are. And how has slavery looked to many from their death-bed? Can a person then, well bear, any longer, to keep back the hire of the laborers, or give the power to do so to his heirs? Can he then think of selling any more human beings into helpless bondage? Can his conscience then afford to give others the privilege of doing it? When he comes to die, can the slave-holder commend himself, for having lived himself, or having supported his family, even

for a single day, upon the unrequited toil of his slaves? Can he any longer sanction the breaking up of families by the slave traffic? Can he then dare any more to keep back his slaves from reading the word of God, "which is able to make wise," both himself and them, "unto salvation?" No! No! There is not a soul of the human race that can afford to do these things, when he comes to exchange worlds and stand in the presence of the Almighty Judge. And the death-bed transactions of many a slave-holder give witness to what I say. They have then acknowledged that it was the safer, the more peaceful, the right way, to give up their slaves, and reward them, as far as they could, for their unpaid labor. They have then felt, that without this, they could not have peace of mind in their dying hours. Their conviction has been, that with nothing less than this could they venture to hope in the mercy

which is by Jesus Christ, or bear to meet their slaves, or their God, in the day of judgment. All classes of slave-holders, the good and bad, the kind and unkind, have been led by their death-bed reflections to make these most emphatic and important confessions in regard to slavery. It is probable that one-half or three-fourths of all the slaves, yearly set at liberty in this land, are indebted to death-bed impressions for their freedom. And many more slave-holders, doubtless, had always intended to do the like deeds meet for repentance before they died. But, as with many other sinners who say to Jesus, "Go thy way for this time," death came before they were quite ready; he would not be delayed any longer; his warnings had been sufficient, and they died without the needful preparation.

XXVIII.

CAN WE CEASE TO DO EVIL AND LEARN
TO DO WELL?

CHILDREN, it has always been found true that the human heart can devise many excuses for sin. 'Many slave-holders, and many of their friends, have said, "slavery is bad, but how can we get rid of it? The evils of letting the slaves go free would be worse than slavery." It is no easy thing for people who have always had servants without pay, who have pleasantly lived, wholly or in part, upon the unpaid toils of their slaves, to give up, at once and forever, all these profits and pleasures.

How can the slaves be safely emancipated? It is true that some difficulties surround this question. Some do honestly fear for their slaves if they set them free. But their fears are often more hon-

est than reasonable. The way of repentance seems hard to walk in to those who have not made up their minds to travel in that path. But when the decision is made, God helps, and all is easy, if we turn not back, nor lust in our hearts for the sins we have left, as did Israel of old for the flesh-pots in Egypt, or as did Lot's wife when she cast back her longing eyes towards Sodom. But when with our repentance we unite persevering trust in God, he sends us his light. He lends us an unseen but sure hand. To cease to do evil is not hard to the willing mind. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." Ps. 37: 5.

If any one heartily wishes to render that which is just and equal to his slaves, there are some things which he can certainly do. He can, from this moment, cease to be a slave-holder in his heart. He can execute some writing, or make

some will, such, that if he dies the next hour after it is finished, his slaves shall all be free. If he cannot do it in one State or land, he can in another. To a man in earnest about his work, little expenses or troubles are no impediment. He can from this time cease to *treat* his slaves as *property*. He can, in every thing except the *name*, make his slaves freemen in most or all slave States. If he can *not* where he is, he can find a place on God's foot stool where he can proclaim his repentance to his slaves. If any of them wish to have free papers, and go out completely from the *thing* and *name* of slavery, he can bring them on their journey and bid them God speed. If they go contrary to his good exhortations and warnings, they must give account to God. In giving them their rights, he has done his duty. If dangers gather thickly around the freed slave, they have most of them been oc-

casioned by slavery itself, and it is best to be quit at once of an evil that brings so many evils in its train, and give voice and example against it. If such a course causes the slave-holder to suffer present inconveniences, or even makes him a beggar, he can bear it. The trial will be fruitful in many blessings. He can do what many have done, march his slaves to a free State and tell them they are free. He can free them in this land, and then let them, or help them, go to Liberia if they wish, and not make them pay a life long slavery tax by being compelled to go to Africa when they wish to remain in the land of their birth. He can give his out-spoken, yet judicious, voice, his influence, and vote for freedom to all slaves in the State where he lives, and wherever else he can make himself felt or heard.

But *he* is only one of many. Yet many are made up of ones. What can

the people of the State do? They can stop their false cries of bloodshed and murder if they should do justice to their slaves by giving them that which is just and equal. They can have a kindly heart and a friendly hand toward all in bondage. They can feel their real dependence upon their slaves, for without them the South would be bankrupt. They can change their tale of charity and good works toward their slaves, and tell what the slaves have done for them while they have been doing them great injustice. They can pass laws to liberate their slaves, give them just dues for the past, and then employ them at fair wages. They can encourage them to work well and be good. All this would be self-denial to the master, in some things; but in *many* things it would be *profit* to both master and servant. Such colored and white people as should then be guilty of indolence, and other

vices, or, as should come upon the public for support without a good reason, could be *made* to work and do right in their conduct. The people could make laws that all such persons should labor and be taught, in prison houses, or on prison plantations, until they were sufficiently punished and reformed. An Apostle said, "If any will not work, neither should he eat." And we may say if any will not work, he should be *made* to work. Such training and punishment could be repeated as often as the crime was repeated. This course would be one of the best educators and sources of learning and good morals, in all the land. They could establish schools, preach the gospel, send out the long withheld Bible, and thus raise up many of the ignorant and degraded to a good standard of intelligence, morality and piety. If all these things could not be done in a day, they could have the *heart* for them in less

than a day, and then execute what their hearts should conceive as fast as ability would allow. This would satisfy the righteous, sin-hating God.

Thus, American Slavery, this mighty and still increasing evil, might be destroyed. Thus might repentance succeed to sin. Thus national crimes might give way to virtuous deeds. Thus the dark and threatening cloud, flashing often with forked dangers, that has so long hung over this fair land, might be made to bear on its front the bow of promise, like that which God gave to Noah after the deluge, and then harmlessly roll away for the sunshine of divine favor to come, which always lights up the way of all who truly repent of their sins. Children, have not you all some little work of feeling right, of speaking truthfully, and of praying daily and fervently, for the liberty, in both soul and body, of all the poor slaves?